Ask the Official - Week 13

December 2 - 8, 2011

The USA Hockey Rulebook and Playing Rules Casebook can be found on the Officials page atwww.usahockey.com.

Answers to other questions may be found at the Officials page atwww.usahockey.com.

Thank you for all your submissions.If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us atasktheofficial@usahockey.org.

QUESTION: Rule 203(a) states that any late-arriving player may be added to the game sheet and participate (with a bench minor assessed to his team); however what is considered "late"?

ANSWER: “Arriving late” would be considered arriving after the game has started.

QUESTION:I was wondering how many games a player is suspended for when he receives a fighting major and game misconduct? If more then one, do they have to be league games or a combination of both non-league and league?

ANSWER: All suspensions, fines, and other forms of discipline are handled by the player’s Local Governing Body (League, Association, Affiliate, etc.). Therefore, this question should be addressed to them. They make the ultimate decision regarding what type of suspension is merited and how it should be served.

QUESTION: Before a game the Home Team Manager, who is also the Timekeeper, comes in to the referee dressing room for a brief pre-game meeting. During the conservation the Referee asks if there will be an ice resurfacing between periods. The manager/timekeeper states that there will be no ice cut.

After the second period, the Home Team leaves the players' bench and the ice is resurfaced. The officials conclude that this change in protocol was an intentional attempt to break the game's momentum (the Visiting Team had scored three unanswered goals and lead 5-1 at the end of the second period). What penalties if any should be assessed at the start of the third period(we assessed a minor penalty for delay of game)?

ANSWER: There are no provisions in the USA Hockey Playing Rules that allow the game officials to assess a penalty in the situation you present. Assuming the Visiting Team was upset with the sudden change in game protocol (both teams may have changed their minds before game time and forgot to inform the officials) the situation should be reported to your Local Supervisor of Officials who will follow through with the Home Team’s local association or league.

QUESTION: Our local house league is looking to squeeze a few extra minutes of playing time into the sixty minute ice session and was considering playing two 20 minunte halves as opposed to three 12 minute periods. The thought is that there would be one less switching of ends and the gathering at the bench that goes along with it for which the time saved would translate into an extra couple of shifts for the players. The oversight board is considering the concept and I was wondering if there is any rule or issue with USA Hockey insurance coverage if the association moves to 20 minute halves vs. 12 minute periods?

ANSWER: Although the USA Hockey Playing Rules define a game as three periods (at twenty minutes or less) this is only a guideline for period and game length. All USA Hockey games are defined as starting when the players enter the ice, and end when they return to the locker room. If you consider the concept of the USAH American Development Model and Mite Jamborees (several Mite teams rotating through three continuous scrimmage areas) there cannot be a strict rule of what is defined as a game and what USA Hockey Insurance would cover.

QUESTION: What is the difference between the four USA Hockey Officiating Levels?

ANSWER: Level 1 is the most basic level of officiating in USA Hockey. All new officials must start at this level. Level 4 is the highest level an official may qualify for and therefore has the highest testing standards for achievement. For further information about registration requirements please consult the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Officiating section of USAHockey.com.